

Trains, Brooms and Marionettes

Note to teachers: This supplement includes a discussion guide, lessons and Michigan Content Standards to use with the Michigan Time Traveler page. You may reproduce the pages in this supplement to use with students.

DISCUSSION GUIDE: (*SOC. 1.1 Time and Chronology; SOC. 1.2 Comprehending the Past*)

- **Toys and Games Through Time:** How long have toys and games been around? What are some of the oldest toys and games in the world? What did 19th century toys teach children? What did 20th century toys teach children? Do you play with any of these now?
- **Travel on the Lionel Train:** What different kinds of skills did Joshua Lionel Cowen have? Why do you think people like toy trains? Who was Richard Kughn? Why was the train in the trash barrel important to him? What is really important to you?
- **Marionettes in Michigan:** What was the Works Progress Administration? What was the National Youth Administration? What project did they have in Manistee?

ACTIVITY ONE: Create a Toy or Game (*SOC. 5.1 Information Processing; Arts 2 Creating*)

People have always played imaginatively with or without props—games and toys. Have students bring in one of their favorite toys.

PART I:

- Have students think of different categories for their games and toys they brought in. They could include: competitive, goal-oriented, imaginative, traditionally male, traditionally female, indoor, outdoor, board game, figures, and others.
- Write the categories on the blackboard and ask students to categorize their games and toys. Sometimes, a game or toy can be listed under more than one category. Have each student explain why his/her game or toy comes under a particular category.

PART II:

- Have students work in small groups to invent a new toy or game. They will have to decide what they want to create and what supplies they will need to use to create it. If they are creating a game, they will need to decide what the rules of the game are. They should not have to buy anything to create the game or toy, but will need to use materials they already have at home or in the classroom. For example, if they develop a board game, they might use buttons or coins or make pieces out of paper or cardboard. If they want to make a doll, they might use an old sock.
- After they have made their toy or game, they need to name it.
- Then have them present their toy or game to the whole class—explaining what they made, how they decided to make it, how they made it, and why they chose the name?

ACTIVITY TWO: Create an Advertisement (*ELA 4. Language; ELA 6. Voice; Arts 2. Creating*)

Trains and railroad-related items reflected America's industrial growth and Lionel toy trains reflected that phenomenon throughout the 20th century. Joshua Lionel Cowen not only invented the electric train, but also developed display advertisements for marketing and advertising toys. He designed his first train, the Electric Express, not as a toy but as a display for selling other toys. He had a radio show and later a television show to promote his electric trains.

Have students develop an advertisement for the toy or game they invented. They can choose to advertise in a newspaper or a magazine, radio or television. Depending on what kind of advertisement they develop, they will need to describe in words and/or graphic design what the toy or game is and why it is special. Have them think about what will make the advertisement appealing to the audience (who will use the toy or game), what the audience wants or needs, and why will people want to buy the toy?

ACTIVITY THREE: Vocation and Avocation: Discover your interests and talents (*SOC I. 3 Meaning and Communication in Context; SOC V.2 Conducting Investigations*)

Discuss: Vocation refers to peoples' work or job. **Avocation** refers to something people do for enjoyment like a hobby. Both Cowen and Kughn had many different interests. As an inventor, Cowen developed a life-long career based on his inventions. His advertising and marketing skills enabled him to become a successful salesman. Kughn was a real estate developer but later in life decided to run a company that sold a product he loved from the time he was a little boy. Have a discussion about what kinds of skills they must have had to do these different kinds of work.

Sometimes people earn money from jobs or businesses that evolve out of their interests and hobbies. Others have hobbies that are completely separate. People are influenced in many different ways about what they decide to do for a living or what they decide to do for a hobby. Sometimes, people are inspired by books, movies, their parents' jobs, their friends' jobs, meeting new people, traveling to new places, seeing new things.

PART I: WHAT WORK DO YOU DO? Have students interview a relative or neighbor about the work they do. Have them complete the chart on page three.

PART II: BRAINSTORMING ABOUT THE FUTURE Have students complete the chart on page four. Then have a brainstorming session with the whole class about what they like to do and what jobs they might do when they grow up based on their favorite interests.

WHAT WORK DO YOU DO?
What kind of work do you do?
Why did you decide to do that kind of work?
What kind of training or education do you need to do your job?
How did you find the job you have?
Did you know anyone who does that kind of work before you decided to work in that area? Family members? Friends?
What is the hardest part of your job? Why?
What is the easiest part of your job? Why?
If you could do any job in the world, what would you choose?
Do you have any hobbies? Are they related to your work?

BRAINSTORMING ABOUT THE FUTURE

What do you like to do in your free time? Why?

How did you become interested in those hobbies?

Do you do these activities alone or with other people?

Do you have a favorite subject in school? A least favorite?

What subjects are easier for you? Harder?